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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/584,417

06/23/2006

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31083.10US2

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34018 7590 05/13/2011
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EXAMINER

SHEIKH, ASFAND M

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3627

NOTIFICATION DATE

DELIVERY MODE

05/13/2011

ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

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DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 4, 5, 10, 11, 13-21, 42, and 43 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection; further the examiner notes the following:

The applicant states a difference of wherein an inventory control system compares a received order for goods against a listing of goods set forth in a received, committed manifest...within the received order for goods and the interpretation of DeMaggio. The examiner notes a stop could be interpreted to include a "drop-off container" and further the ability to report manifest data to a logistics system which can include not expected or missing based on a check list (see at least, col. 5, lines 45-col. 6, line 7). Therefore this argument is not persuasive.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 4, 5, 10, 20-21, 42-43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over DeMaggio (US 7,292,989 B2) in view of Applicant's Admitted Prior Art as per Applicant's Specification: Background (see pp., 1-2).

Claims 1 and 42-43

DeMaggio discloses a system for facilitating and controlling route-based delivery of an order[s] for goods from a central servicing warehouse to a remote ship-to site[s] (see at least, col. 1, lines 59-col. 2, lines 31: the examiner notes cross dock location (e.g. central servicing warehouse/ship-to site (see col. 7, lines 65-67)) to combine a first lot (e.g. first route) and second lot (e.g. second route) of goods to be delivered to a plant from suppliers based on control from a logistics station (see col. 8, lines 23-24)), comprising: a manifesting system in communication with the inventory control system (see at least, 5, lines 46-col. 6, line 28 and col. 8, lines 24-61), a manifesting system implementing a manifesting process to manage and document the location and status of the orders for goods, associated inventory of goods in the central servicing warehouse, and the hand-off at the remote ship-to site of custody of the order for goods between parties involved in the process (see at least, col. 1, lines 59-col. 2, lines 50: the

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examiner notes logistics data and col. 7, lines 65-67); a security monitoring system: wherein the manifesting process identifies and compiles into a draft manifest a logical grouping of all outstanding orders to be transported to ship-to sites on a specific route (see at least, col. 2, lines 31-50 and col. 5, lines 46-col. 6, lines 28: the examiner notes a truck can make multiple supplier pick up's (e.g. route) based on its schedule and manifest to be delivered to the cross dock); converts the draft manifest to a committed manifest, where the committed manifest becomes the official, permanent record of the orders for goods consigned to the truck for that run on that specific route, when it is determined that the draft manifest record accurately reflects the orders for goods to be loaded on the truck (see at least, col. 10, lines 5-58: the examiner notes a transportation schedule/manifest (see col. 5, lines 46-col. 6, line 28) is confirmed (e.g. becomes official)); and communicates the committed manifest to a inventory control system (see col. 5, lines 46-col. 6, line 28); wherein the inventory control system logically checks off each good in the order for goods, against a list of orders for goods it is expecting as indicated by the committed manifest and determines whether any goods within the orders for goods are either [not] expected or missing (see at least, col. 5, lines 46-col. 6, lines 15: the examiner notes a checklist would indicate the ability to verify); automatically generates and sends a communication alert to the security monitoring system (see at least, col. 6, lines 16-28: the examiner notes a late pallet (e.g. missing pallet) can be indicated as an alert to the logistics station for rescheduling a new truck pickup).

DeMaggio fails to disclose one or more self-service drop-off containers located at the remote ship-to site; an inventory control system associated with the one or more drop-off containers;... via the deposit of the order of goods into the one or more self-service drop-off containers located at the remote-ship site; wherein the inventory control system logically checks off each good in the order for goods when the order for goods is deposited into the one or more self-service drop-off containers...

The examiner notes AAPA discloses one or more self-service drop-off containers located at the remote ship-to site (see Background, pp., 1-2); an inventory control system associated with the one or more drop-off containers (see Background, pp., 1-2);... via the deposit of the order of goods into the one or more self-service drop-off containers located at the remote-ship site (see Background, pp., 1-2); wherein the inventory control system logically checks off each good in the order for goods when the order for goods is deposited into the one or more self-service drop-off containers (see Background, pp., 1-2)...

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the teachings of DeMaggio to include one or more self-service drop-off containers located at the remote ship-to site; an inventory control system associated with the one or more drop-off containers;... via the deposit of the order of goods into the one or more self-service drop-off containers located at the remote-ship site; wherein the inventory control system logically checks off each good in the order for goods when the order for goods is deposited into the one or more self-service drop-off containers... as taught by the AAPA to combine prior art elements

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according to known methods to yield predictable results (i.e., integration of the teachings of DiMaggio's system to include the use of AAPA's self-service drop-off containers and their respective inventory system) . One ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to combine the teachings in order to deliver goods to customers at remote locations (see Background, pp., 1-2).

Claims 4

DeMaggio discloses wherein the manifesting system posts the committed manifest into an order management system of a vendor of the goods to update records to reflect that the orders for goods have left the central servicing warehouse and are on the route to remote ship-to sites (see at least, see col. 5, lines 46-col. 6, line 28).

Claims 5

DeMaggio discloses wherein the manifesting system posts the committed manifest into an inventory management system of a vendor of the goods to reflect that the orders for goods is now under the control of a driver (see at least, see col. 5, lines 46-col. 6, line 28)

Claims 10

DeMaggio discloses wherein the inventory control system transmits delivery results to the manifesting system so that inventory records of the manifesting system may be updated to reflect that the orders for goods have been received at the ship-to site and

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are available for pick up by a customer at that location (see at least, col. 6, lines 52-61: the examiner notes a specific dock number for pickup by a customer (see col. 7, lines 19-34: the examiner notes a high tier)).

DeMaggio fails to disclose ... the one or more self service drop off locations.

The examiner notes AAPA discloses ... the one or more self service drop off locations (see Background, pp., 1-2)...

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the teachings of DeMaggio to include ... the one or more self service drop off locations as taught by the AAPA to combine prior art elements according to known methods to yield predictable results (i.e., integration of the teachings of DiMaggio's system to include the use of AAPA's self-service drop-off containers and their respective inventory system) . One ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to combine the teachings in order to deliver goods to customers at remote locations (see Background, pp., 1-2).

Claims 20

DeMaggio discloses wherein the manifesting system facilitates and controls route-based delivery of orders for goods by using an order cut-off time for all the ship-to sites on a specific delivery routes whereby customers will know a time by which to place an order for goods to ensure delivery at their chosen ship-to site within a given time frame (see at least, col. 10, lines 41-48).

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Claims 21

DeMaggio discloses where the draft manifest is generated automatically in response to attaining the cut-off time for that route (see at least, col. 10, lines 5-58).

Claims 11 and 13-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over DeMaggio (US 7,292,989 B2) in view of Applicant's Admitted Prior Art as per Applicant's Specification: Background (see pp., 1-2) as per the respective claims above, further in view of Examiner's Official Notice.

Claims 11 and 13-15

DeMaggio in view of AAPA fails to disclose wherein the one or more self- service drop-off requires a customer to identify themselves appropriately using a previously determined PIN or ORN in order to be allowed access to goods within the order for goods; wherein the inventory control system reports back to the manifesting system an acceptance and removal of a good within the order for goods from the one or more self-service, drop-off containers to the manifesting system so that order status and inventory records maintained by the manifesting system may be updated; wherein the manifesting system causes billing of a customer in response to receiving a notification of the acceptance and removal of the good within the order for goods from the one or more self-service, drop-off containers by the customer; wherein the manifesting system causes a debiting of a customer account in response to receiving a notification of the

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acceptance and removal of the good within the order for goods from the one or more self- service, drop-off containers by the customer.

The examiner takes Official Notice that it is old and well known in the logistics arts to verify a customer identity before allowing delivery (e.g. identification via ID Card/PIN/Password) and allow a customer to inspect the delivered goods for acceptance/removal (e.g. furniture/electronics delivery inspection) and further billing//debiting the customer account based on the accepting or removing the good which can be done once an indication has been received of acceptance or removal (e.g. customer's account is credited if the customer returns the item to the deliverer and deliverer indicates return (i.e. personal delivery of sales item from previous owner to new owner)).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the teachings of DeMaggio in view of AAPA to include the features as taught by the Examiner's Official Notice. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to combine the teachings in order to provide stronger relationship for a customer/vendor.

Claims 16-19

DeMaggio in view of AAPA fails to disclose wherein the inventory control system of a ship-to site initiates a goods return process for rejected orders, returned goods, abandoned deliveries, or empty containers by creating a to-be-returned reverse logistics order in the manifesting system which functions to notify a vendor to expect goods for

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receipt back at the central servicing warehouse and wherein the manifesting system responds to a to- be-returned logistics order by scheduling a driver to pick up the goods to be returned on a next visit to the ship-to site and wherein the inventory control system records a time of picks up goods to be returned and notifies the manifesting system of the time and wherein receipt of goods to be returned is confirmed by the central servicing warehouse and entered into the manifesting system.

The examiner takes Official Notice that it is old and well known in the logistics arts to have a logistics system the return process of a failed delivery by notifying parties of returned items (e.g. damage sofa is returned and warehouse is notified of damage) and further creating the necessary routes/pickup time from delivered location to hub to central location of return and entering data within the logistics system.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the teachings of DeMaggio in view of AAPA to include the features as taught by the Examiner's Official Notice. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to combine the teachings in order to provide an automated and easy return process that sets up and notifies the given parties of a return.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Asfand Sheikh whose telephone number is (571)272-1466. The examiner can normally be reached on 9a-5p.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ryan Zeender can be reached on (571)272-6790. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Asfand Sheikh/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3627